

44 The Reformation a Many-sided Movement.

practice. We must beware, however, of limiting the word liberty to religious liberty. The Reformation was a many-sided movement. We have called it an emancipation—the liberation of the individual soul from the authority of pope and hierarchy. In a general sense it was this. At the same time, the factors that made it, as well as the results it achieved, were complex. These factors were intellectual, political, social, even economic, as well as religious, and its effects were correspondingly wide. To the religious ferment of the age various influences contributed, and a deeper knowledge of the history of that age reveals their far-reaching effects on the nations of Western Europe. In our study of the movement in these lands we shall have occasion to learn, more or less, how complex it was both in its factors and in its effects. We shall see, for instance, how the intellectual temper of the time made itself felt in fomenting the spirit of revolt against the domination of religious tradition, and how it contributed that tone of culture and erudition that made the reformers great theologians as well as great preachers; how political sentiment or ideas gave strength to the cause of religious reform, and how that cause in turn affected political action and thought; how social and economic abuse tended to abet the demand for religious reform, and how the reaction against such abuse was in turn influenced by this demand. More especially, we shall see how this many-sided movement made for progress, if we shall also, unfortunately, have only too good reason to signalise its limitation in this respect.

Very noteworthy is the revolutionary character of the emancipation movement which we term the Reformation. Revolution is, in fact, as appropriate a name for it as Reformation. It was a complete breaking away from the Church of the past as represented by the pope. There was no compromise on this point in any of the lands where the Reformation triumphed. The pope was relentlessly deposed as the Antichrist. He must be content to be Bishop of Rome, and nothing more. The claim to the universal allegiance of Christendom was treated as a pretension, an usurpation. It had in fact never been recognised in the eastern half of the Christian world. In all reformed lands, with the exception of Scandinavia and England, the historical hierarchy was swept